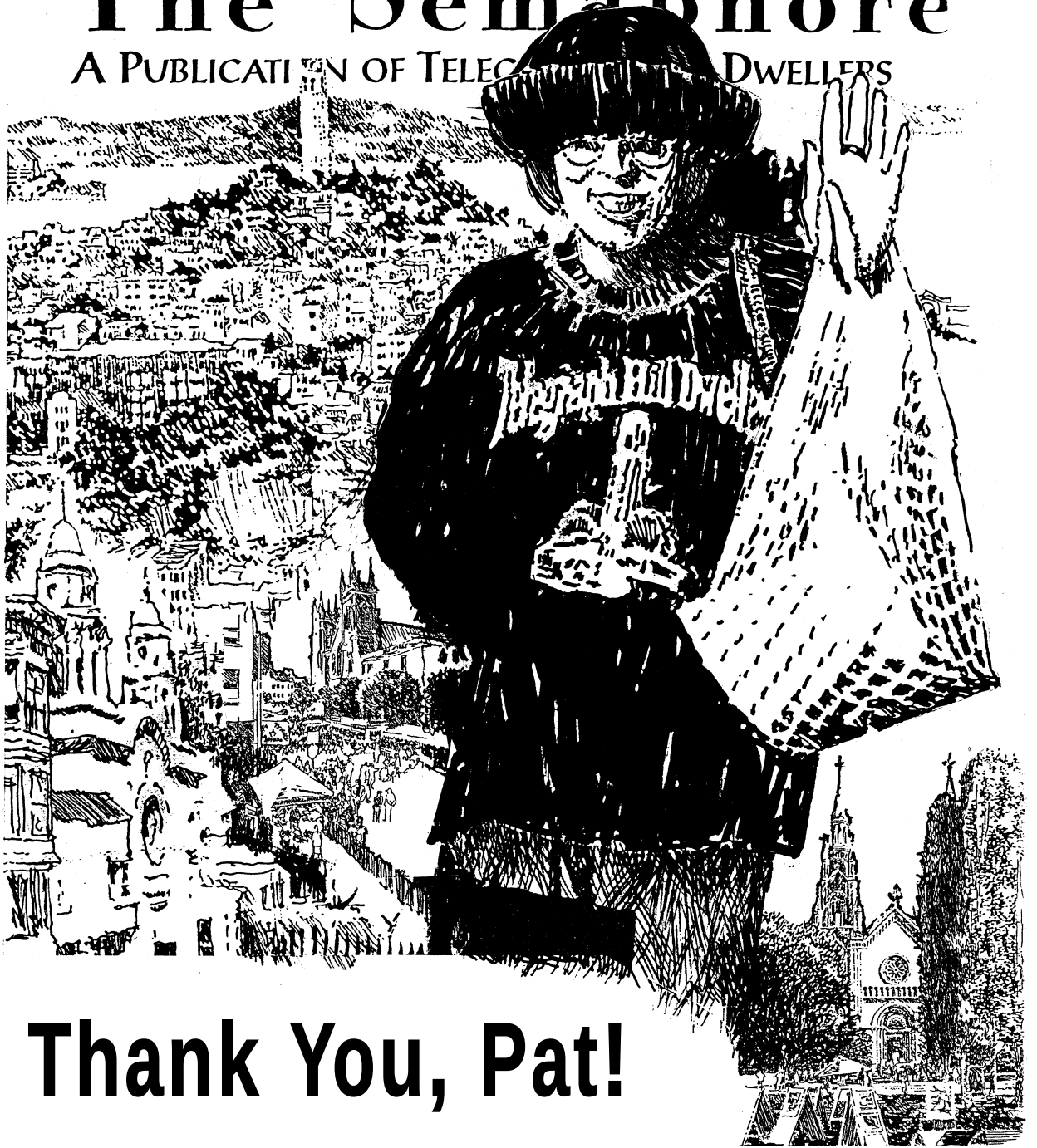
The Semaphore

A Publication of Telegraph Hill Dwellers



Thank You, Pat!

ISSUE 151.2 SPECIAL "Thank You, Pat!" EDITION

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

photo by Jason Doiy

Aaron Peskin

by Aaron Peskin, THD President 1999-present

After seven years as editor, overseeing the publication of 22 issues of the *Semaphore* Patricia Cady is retiring and returning to civilian life. We all owe her a deep debt of gratitude for her professional and loving stewardship of our 46 year-old quarterly.

Of all of the myriad functions which makes the Telegraph Hill Dwellers one of the most effective neighborhood organizations in the city (all of them volunteer), producing the *Semaphore* is arguably the most important, time-consuming and demanding.

If there were awards for neighborhood association publications (it's is more than a mere "newsletter") I have no doubt that under Pat's editorship the *Semaphore* would be the recipient of no end of awards: for elegant design, comprehensive content and editorial quality.

The title editor doesn't do her or the position justice (although she is an editor's editor). Pat sees the whole task through from start to finish four times a year from assigning the articles to editing them, laying it out, and coordinating production and distribution.

We all have a bit of a sense of Pat — her determined but gentle spirit is woven into each issue of the *Semaphore*. Working with Pat has been a delight for me and each of the five THD presidents she has worked with. And regardless of who is president she doggedly maintains her editorial autonomy (a line I've learned not to cross). Even as deadlines loom she always stays calm, thoughtful and focused. Despite the time commitment and having to nag people (like me) to finish their articles Pat never treats the job like a burden and never whines.

Many members — even folks who have left the Hill and moved to other Cities — have told me that they remain members so that they continue to receive the *Semaphore*. From time to time we have had tourists join THD after reading a copy of the *Semaphore* in a local cafe. Members of the press (who are also provided courtesy copies) look forward to it and call to follow up and write articles on issues that they first learn about in the *Semaphore*.

As president, I am the one who is lucky enough to field many of the resounding compliments THD gets for the *Semaphore* (which is always a welcome respite from the day to day complaints about noise and film companies and the like).

THD and its efforts to preserve and improve our corner of the world is as good as the volunteers who devote their time, energy and soul. Pat has spent countless hours seeing it through issue after issue, year after year. On behalf of Telegraph Hill Dwellers, thank you Pat.

Cover and introductory comments by Rod Freebairn-Smith: Neighbors and Hill Dwellers salute the many years of Pat Cady's acute writing and editing the *Semaphore*, her famous dead-eye editorial precision at the *Semaphore*'s helm. We're grateful for her steadfast support of neighborhood values. On the cover some of her many projects surround her Pioneer Park, Coit Tower, Our Lady of Guadalupe, the trees at the Shrine of St. Francis, the landmarking of Washington Square. With heartfelt thanks for so many years of service to San Francisco, North Beach and Telegraph Hill we salute our *Semaphore* cover girl this April 2000.

Editor: Dawne Bernhardt. Co-editors: Aaron Peskin & Billie Atlas

PAST PRESIDENTS

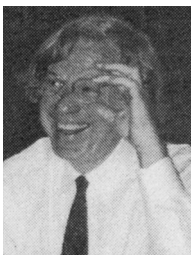
Gerry Crowley
THD President 1997-1999

I liken Pat Cady's five years as editor of the *Semaphore* to a five-year pregnancy, always in the third trimester, awaiting birth at the end of each quarter, the birth of a new edition. Although countless THDers contributed to the *Semaphore* during her tenure, the publication was always Pat's baby. It was she who nurtured and molded it, always with passion and professionalism

Pat's passions, well known to *Semaphore* readers, include the history of North Beach, Telegraph Hill and The Waterfront as well as the protection against negative development and unnecessary demolition of historic buildings.She has championed the improvement of local parks and defined the culture of our community through coverage of the people whose lives and work have defined that culture.

On a personal level, I have appreciated Pat's unfailing patience with me during times of writer's block, when I couldn't meet the deadline for the President's Letter. Her humor never took a vacation. I also appreciated her humility when praise was bestowed upon her. In turn, she has always been generous with her praise of others.

As she leaves her watch, Pat has the satisfaction of knowing that the *Semaphore* is the most outstanding neighborhood publication in San Francisco. Happy Trails, God Bless and Grazie.



Joe Luttrell
THD President 1996-1997

It was early on in the struggle over the North Beach garage. I was appearing for the Hill Dwellers before the Parking and Traffic Commis-sion. The fix was already in—the Commission was just going through the motions of a hearing.

Leading the charge for the Commission was Sharon Bretz, then one of its commissioners. Compared to her, Attila the Hun was a smoothie. "What", she demanded as I began to speak, "are the Hill Dwellers' boundaries?". The implication was clear—since the garage was a block and a half outside our boundaries, I might as well sit down.

Midway through her harangue, however, she interrupted herself—"You publish *The Semaphore*, don't you?". I had to admit we did. "It's a great paper", she barked, "I read every bit of it".

Wow, I thought to myself, even those who won't give us the time of day read The *Semaphore*! And of course Sharon Bretz and everybody else read it due to one person, Pat Cady. For *The Semaphore* IS Pat Cady. Editor, writer, cajoler, deadline-meeter, you name it, Pat Cady has made *The Semaphore* happen, and the Hill Dwellers have benefited accordingly. In no other way do the Dwellers reach as many people as they do through the *Semaphore*, and that includes the membership at large.

There can be no sweeter, gentler person than Pat Cady; and can she put out a paper! Is it too early to talk about canonization?

Mia Morrill
THD President 1995-1996

We have depended on her and she has never let us down. We have benefited from her loyalty to the Hill Dwellers, her love of our neighborhood and her strong sense

continued on page 10

PAT CADY . . .

If I had a do-good angel on my shoulder, whispering into my ear, she might look a lot like Patricia Cady. There are quite a number of do-good deeds that I've gotten credit for that originated with Pat's whispering in my ear. It's quite a talent, to recognize what needs to be done, what fights must be waged; to mix logic and pleading with righteous indignation; to cajole, rouse, and deputize others to take up the pen, banner or sword. Pat Cady excels at it.

Much lip service is paid these days to finding one's compass, living morally. Many have forgotten faith and how to live by it. These traits are Pat's hallmarks. But she's not one of those glassy-eyed, passive angels—Pat can kvetch and tussle with the best of them. And her willingness to take on the good cause, and her ability to raise others to the task, makes her a valuable friend and formidable foe. I am pleased—and relieved—to be on the friend side of that equation.

I have worked with Pat on countless *Semaphores* in the past years—from 400 Trees, through Pioneer Park, now Washington Square and the North Beach Playground. She has been more tireless and hardworking and professional than any volunteer need be. She has been as patient and accommodating as any friend could be. And, in light of her many contributions, I am willing to overlook all the "projects" she's gotten me into.

I speak for so many in saluting Pat on her "retirement" from the *Semaphore*, and in thanking her for the information and enjoyment she's provided the Hill Dwellers in the past years. I am sure she will think of us fondly —at least once every quarter.

— Julienne M. Christensen

Good Show, Pat!

There are many things to salute in Pat Cady's remarkable tenure at the *Semaphore*. I am glad to have this opportunity to applaud her community activism as Editor.

Pat not only wrote articulate and pungent editorials about the controversies that swirled around the Hill during her editorship, she also took time to attend meetings and make speeches and stood tall in the defense of threatened institutions.

I am thinking particularly (and gratefully) about her efforts to save the North Beach Garage, which was eventually lost, and her passionate fight to prevent the loss of historic St. Francis of Assisi Church, which was closed amid many bitter tears and then reopened in an important new role.

As a friend I watched with awe as Pat kept her temper, her courtesy and her sense of humor in her writings and in her talk with the obdurate forces determined to padlock the wonderful old church.

Pat remained reasonable throughout the months and years of the battle to preserve St. Francis of Assisi and then played a significant role in recreating the church as the national shrine that we have today in North Beach.

A community that does not preserve and protect its heritage is a place without meaning, without tradition, without color and without a heart.

Salute, Pat Cady *— June A. Osterberg*

A Tribute to Pat Cady

Last weekend I was in North Beach for the day, and in the evening I caught a cable car to Market Street, from whence I

. . . PASSIONATE CRUSADER

would take BART to my home in the East Bay. As the cable car passed Broadway and Mason, I heard a tourist remark, "What a pretty church!" That Nuestra Sonora de Guadalupe still stands is a tribute to Pat Cady and her partners in preservation, Clementina Garcia, Irene Jimenez, Daisy Lem and others. I was able to watch their effort closely, and I was struck by how effectively they marshaled support for this cause. None of them, to my knowledge, had ever been involved in historic preservation before the Catholic Church closures of the early 1990s. Learning the planning process can be quite intimidating; these women did that. They researched Guadalupe Church's history, they produced a case report for the Landmarks Board, they organized neighbors, former parishioners, and preservationists, and they determinedly saw the process through to a successful conclusion over many, many months. The crowd they brought to the Planning Commission meeting was one of the largest I've ever seen for a preservation cause. They put on a clinic for the rest of the preservation community to learn from.

Residents of North Beach, Russian Hill and Telegraph Hill found common cause in this campaign, and they have worked together ever since. Than you, Pat, for helping to forge the links that must remain strong if we are to preserve the beauty and history of these neighborhoods. Although you are leaving as *Semaphore* editor, I am sure you will remain active in the neighborhood in other ways.

— William Kostura, architectural historian and former S.F. Landmarks Board member

Faith, Perseverance, and Literacy

Who was this voice in the background, this quiet unassuming person at the heart of efforts to preserve two North Beach Churches? How was it that entrenched institutions came to embrace her vision? Working with others, Patricia created a community which shared and championed her goal, the productive use of these places of worship into the future.

The people one met in the campaign for Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe were entrancing: the mariachis who played at dawn in December, the man who restored the mosaics on the Church he was married in, the retired Pulitzer Prize winning columnist who told the Board of Supervisors of his encounter with Jack Kerouac in the church in the 1950's, the Chinese Panamanian San Franciscans who drove across town to worship here for its meaning to their larger community, the historian who showed one the burn marks on the wall in the basement from the Great Fire. Not to mention her co-conspirators; Clementina, Daisy, and Irene who never forgot a face or a name.

Patricia's success lay in her ability to tell just enough of a story that people who heard it, or read it, were compelled to supply their own ending. In the process, they got the byline, just like an editor soliciting stories for a newsletter, her role receded. Her faith, perseverance, and literacy, whether guiding the *Semaphore*, or creating a National Shrine, was her gift to us all.

—F. Joseph Butler

PAT CADY . . .

Dear Patricia Sullivan Cady:

If there were a Pulitzer Prize for Best Neighborhood Newsletter Editor, you would be the winner.

For the part seven year, you have given hundreds of hours to edit our outstanding Sempahore—coping with deadlines, sometimes sloppy copy, fragile egos, dark photos, stubborn layout artists, overworked printers, late deliveries, and even lost mail.

You always came through, Pat, unflappable, professional, tactful and kind. Your hundreds of loyal readers are grateful. Elsewhere on these pages are tributes from many other THDers on your countless and praiseworthy accomplishments on behalf of our community and our City.

In closing, Pat, I'm nominating you for THD's own, special Pulitzer Prize.

— Billie Atlas

She Always Cared

Your years of editing the *Semaphore* have demonstrated exceptional stores of the three requisite qualities of good editors: intelligence, perseverance , and humor. But less well-known is the fact that you worried each issues of the *Semaphore* into existence. Everything else went "on hold" while you were busy getting an issue ready for the printer. Every aspect of each issue needed to meet you high standards (and really, how few ever did!) All because you care deeply about this lovely city and the lives of the people in it.

More than anything else it is an appreciation of what is beautiful and unique that is your editorial strength. Years of observing what is going on around you have sharpened you senses and wit; never do you sentimentalize or indulge in nostalgic fantasy. More likely than the big or sensational issues, it is the serendipitous, the personal, the quirky and the joyous details that catch your eye: the celebrations of the spirit and the senses. As a result, your editorial voice is unique. But, much as I will miss it on the pages of the *Semaphore*, I can't help thinking your "retirement" will allow us more time for lovely days exploring and talking, otherwise called "rattling around".

— Lisa Steadman

She Made it Look Easy

It's hard to believe that Pat Cady is no longer the editor of the *Semaphore*. To describe Pat in her capacity as editor is a bit tricky. Usually you think of an editor as an irascible person always fighting deadlines, jumping on reporters for being late, screaming at printers and layout people, and in general looking like a person caught in the throes of a bout of dyspepsia. I worked with Pat over a period of seven years, and there was none of this – not her style!

Pat was such a smooth operator. Things just went right. She'd call and give me the deadline. Sometimes she's suggest a story she'd like covered, but she never pushed you in a direction you didn't want to go. If you needed to edit an article down to fit, she would let you know well in advance. And most importantly, the end product was inevitably better. She had a wonderful way with words.

Many Hill Dwellers contributed to the *Semaphore* over the years. I suspect Pat dealt with all of her "reporters" in this thoughtful, considerate and understanding way. That meant countless hours. Over the years, the quality of

. . . *Semaphore* Editor par excellence

the product showed her professionalism. She was always on top of the late breaking neighborhood news. And she was a logistics expert. On more than one occasion Pat would hot-foot-it-down to the United States Postal Service to loosen a log jam or help find the lost pallet of *Semaphores*.

During all the interactions Pat had with contributors, with layout people, with printers, postal service and yes, with the occasional irate subscriber, she was unflappable. Pat always kept her cool gracefully rearranging her day to accommodate any and all emergencies. Once in a while when things were going particularly wrong, she'd jokingly say something like, "I'm not in it for the money." Pat was the incarnate editor and a great person to work with. She made it look easy.

— Gerry Hurtado

Pat Cady's Retiring?? Not Really, I'm Sure

My first acquaintance with Pat waw when she asked us to help her in saving Our Lady of Guadalupe from the diocesan ax. I said I thought we'd be interested, and then met Pat in person on the steps of the church. She had mobilized the neighborhood (several neighborhoods, in fact), the parishioners, and God only knows who else that Saturday morning to show the support she had rallied. And she won!

The accomplishment got her on the THD Board, and we have been taking advantage of Pat's ability, and willingness, and enthusiasm to just do it ! ever since.

She's been instrumental in keeping St. Francis Church alive, and part of the neighborhood. When there was nobody to put the *Semaphore* together, she decided she could do that too—and has, with enormous success, forever, it seems.

She has been a regular at the THD recruiting booth at the North Beach Fair—I've been her partner in those efforts a few times, and believe me, she's good! In fact, if there's anything that needs doing, just let Pat know—and it's done. All this, while dealing with the vagaries and fluctuating demands of the freelancer's life.

So retiring? Can't believe it! It's just a question of the next project, the next cause.

Many, many thanks, Part, for what you've done for THD, for the neighborhood, for all of us.

— June Fraps

patriciacadythelady.freeperson.com

Having come to the THD Board in 1997
and being shuttled to Parking and Traffic…
where I quickly developed a flat tire…a
wild-eyed-but-perfectly-groomed red
haired *Editor* person (who called everybody
"pet" and "pal", when she wasn't miffed,
or let 'em have it, when she was – ("which they *well*
deserve, God bless 'em") appeared on the grim
road rage horizon and saved me. *Saved* me from
late-onset acne (probably) and a host of disagreeable
psychiatric maladies.
and surprise, surprise, She was not just funny,
appreciating the healing qualities of cashmere
for the body and a quick trip to Paris for the soul
(talk about practical Zen); she was *intelligent*
and caring not to mention a pit bull
in print with certain socio/political creeps.
Eager to stick her neck out for the sake of
community justice, she also appreciated good
lookin' guys and dogs (or, was that vice versa?),
So who could resist sidling up the Semaphore
Queen's team of one. Not I. Nor, will I ever by sorry.

Sheila Black, Advertising Manager

THERE'S SOMETHING . . .

A Great And Gutsy Journalist

It was almost time to stop working on the next issue of the *Semaphore*. Time to make that end-of-day martini, when the doorbell rang.

The lady in red handed me a last minute article for the next issue that scathingly attacked the Archdiocese of San Francisco. Pat Cady was outraged at the planned closing of Our Lady of Guadeloupe Church.

Pat has never dimmed her crusading spark, either in her victory on church closure or any of the other issues she herded though the Semaphore's columns as she became a regular and eventually replaced me as editor.

— Clyde Steiner

She's Thoughtful and Conscientious

We've known you for quite a while, but have come to know you better since we assumed the roles of Membership Chairman and Webmaster, and watched you join the 20th century, though in its waning moments, by becoming a member of the ranks of those who rely more and more on email.

Always thoughtful and conscientious; "How many *Semaphores* will you need so that you can send a copy to each new member?" and always planning: "It's almost time to email the member addresses to the mailing house for the new *Semaphore*, but don't do it till the day after tomorrow—Harry would probably lose the file."

Thanks for the *Semaphore*—it will be in good hands but it has been in great hands.

— Rozell and Peter Overmire

She's a Lady!

I was handling *Semaphore* advertising when Pat became Editor. I suggest we could increase our revenues by signing up some Broadway strip-joints and adult bookstores. I had always wanted an excuse to visit these businesses anyway. She came down strong that this is no way to treat our readers. Pat is a lady.

—Stephen Y. Hord

Our Katydid Cady

Katydids make cheerful sounds,
Our Cady did though more profound.
North Beach to me in days of old,
Longed to have its stories told.
You viewed my stuff without hauteur,
It's fun to be published autheur!

— Helen von Ammon

The Power of Prayer – A tribute to Pat Cady

Those of us who know the success of Pat Cady's activist history to preserve Catholic churches throughout the City from being sold off must reflect thoughtfully when she says there is power in Prayer. Saint Francis of Assisi Church was Pat's parish. It was closed down. By a letter directive from then Archbishop Quinn to a committee trying to save the church, the church was forbidden ever again to be a place of "divine worship". Today the Church is the Shrine of Saint Francis of Assisi, and masses are held regularly. Many prayers were uttered by the committee of Pat, Arlene and Irene.

I am from a different tradition of belief not tutored in the use of prayer or the comprehension of its possible efficacy. Yet, I've had to wonder how Pat might be on to something. I received

. . . ABOUT PAT

a a get well card from Pat recently letting me know that a candle was lit for me at the Shrine with prayers. My health made a dramatic turn around just about that time. Coincidence, maybe.

Pat Cady has always been a person of faith. She has faith in the power of prayer, in the teachings of the Church, in the inherent goodness of people, in the democratic process, and in the timely submission by writers of articles for the *Semaphore*.

While some of you my not be convinced about the power of prayer, why not give it a try. Here's a list:

• Timely and under budget construction of Pioneer Park Plan

• St. Francis Church's rectory vacated and turned over to the Franciscans

• Funds for seismic reinforcement of the Shrine and early completion

Bless you, too, Pat Cady

— Arthur Chang

A Chinese proverb says:
"A good memory does not equal pale ink."
Thank you Patricia for your journalistic
flair, gentle nudging and patience,
in eliciting from so many, so much and
so often—-
all the while walking the neighborhood
beat and pounding them typewriter
keys—-
the historical essence of Telegraph Hill
Dwellers
for generations to come.

—Howard Wong AIA

Upon her Retirement (to Pat Cady)

As editor of the *Semaphore*
she muchly improved it
which is also what editors are for.
Besides, I mean, submitting
clean copy to the printers on time
and not permitting, for instance,
the splintering of words, bad grammar
and flights of fanciful metaphors.

At the basic, difficult task of soliciting
articles
with maybe a groan and certainly a plea
from numerous members of THD
that keep us informed in an attractive format
of what is going on it our neighborhood
Pat was good.
In fact she was great
and never late.

Therefore:
cadenced compliments to
Pat Cady, who,
By the way is a charming lady.

— John D. Dolan

A Song in Her Heart

Pat Cady's fascination with and enthusiasm for people, for music – and for the things of life – are a welcome inspiration!

— Elaine Lust

Pat The Historian

North Beach Brach Library was lucky enough to have Patricia Cady and Marsha Garland give a presentation entitled "The True History of North Beach," on September 19,

continued on page 11

THD'S TRIPLE CROWN AWARD

Creating and presenting awards was the highlight of being the NICE Committee Chair. Writing them up for the *Semaphore* was grueling—a nightmare which I survived, thanks to Pat's encouragement, editing, and exquisite patience.

No other project could have brought me from happy retirement than Aaron's request to coordinate this tribute to Pat Cady.

Congratulations Pat, you deserve all three of the awards that THD bestows.

— Dawne Bernhardt, NICE Committee Chair (retired)

PEOPLE WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Pat Cady

Semaphore Editor par Excellence

DECEMBER 1994–MARCH 2000

Honoring the
HERITAGE OF THE HILL

Pat Cady

Passionate Crusader

GREEN THUMB
Honor Roll

Pat Cady

Dedicated Preservationist

. . . And She Also Did Brooms!

THD's Eco-Blitz Team, Oct. 15, 1995, Clean Sweep Day

There's Something About Pat, cont'd. from p. 9

1995. Their insightful program delighted the audience. Pat and Marsha explained that the true history of the area began with the Costonoan indigenous peoples who lived here thousands of years before the Spanish arrived.

At the end of the talk Marsha and Pat asked the audience a series of questions including –

1. Who are the three top movie producers who have offices in North Beach?

2. What musical instrument was invented in North Beach?

3. Where were the two bullfight rings in North Beach?

I'm sure Pat will be glad to give you the answers if you ask her.

—Gardner Haskell, librarian North Beach library

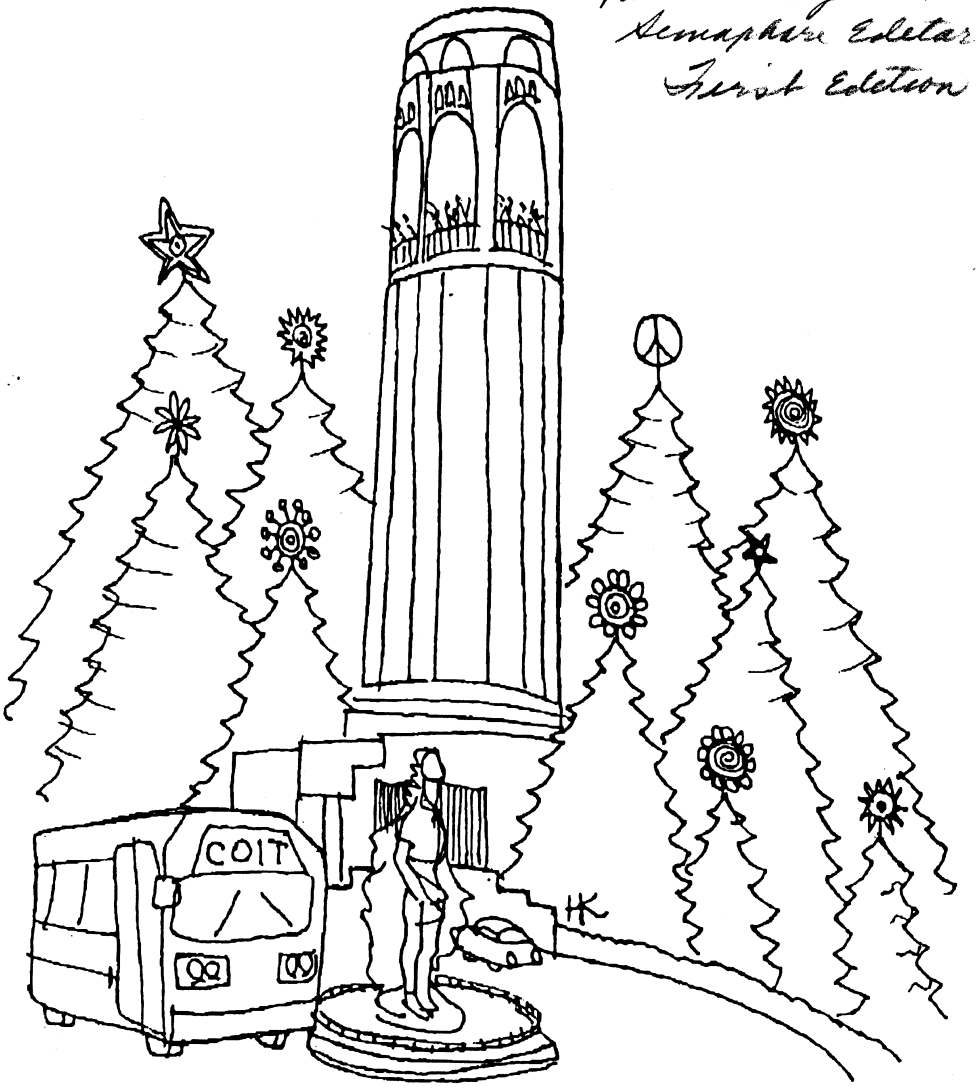
Past Presidents

continued from page 3

of community. Never buckling under the pressures of tardy deliveries of copy, always accepting the last minute additions, she has gotten the quarterly on its way into our mailboxes. Always showing a genuine interest in others, always wearing a smile, she has gently conducted the news of the neighborhood. Many times I pushed my envelope through her gate a the eleventh hour…and I could see I wasn't the only one waiting to the last minute!…..When I pull Pat Cady's *Semaphore* from my mailbox, I know that I am going to have a good read over a cup of coffee. You have done us a great service. Thank you, Pat, for every single edition!

The Semaphore THD 1954 - 1994

Patricia Cady
Semaphore Editor
First Edition



Happy Holidays

Issue 130 December 1994